



CALIFORNIA DEPARTMENT OF  
FOOD & AGRICULTURE

Karen Ross, Secretary

April 12, 2016

To: California Poultry Producers – **Spring Avian Influenza Update (Outdoor Access)**

As we move into summer and out of winter waterfowl migration, please continue to invest in biosecurity in order to protect your flocks, your business, and California's economy. Field reports from staff have been very positive in this area. For biosecurity reasons, we usually only evaluate external improvements to your ranches from within vehicles on public roads, but we have seen many new investments in biosecurity. Perhaps your increased efforts have been the reason for no detections of reportable avian influenza in commercial poultry during winter migration. We know these birds carried avian influenza, yet you kept it out of your flocks.

Note that the California Animal Health and Food Safety Laboratory has been working with the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Wildlife Services on testing wild water fowl all Fall and Winter with no detections of highly pathogenic avian influenza, but they have reported significant numbers of birds carrying reportable avian influenza (low pathogenic H5 and H7). Reportable avian influenza triggers the same regulatory response as highly pathogenic avian influenza. Clearly biosecurity investment, mortality/production vigilance, and avian influenza surveillance continue to be warranted.

If your production system and marketing allow for separation from wild water fowl, please continue to maintain this separation indefinitely. However, the Organic Program and certifiers require access to the outdoors, **and with winter migration over and no active outbreaks, there is no justification for a continued statewide indoor recommendation from me.** If you feel your farm is at increased risk due to proximity of water bodies and continued presence of wild water fowl with no way to mitigate, please contact me, so our field veterinarians can evaluate and make a recommendation in writing for your specific ranch.

Thanks again for all you do to protect your flocks.

Sincerely,

Annette Jones, D.V.M.  
State Veterinarian and Director

